

Baker, Howard H. Jr.

Huntsville, TN

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HOWARD H. BAKER, JR.

January 24, 2001

Mr. Gary S. Hartman
U. S. Department of Energy
Oak Ridge Operations Office
P. O. Box 2001
Oak Ridge, TN 37831

Dear Mr. Hartman:

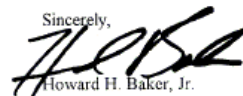
I am writing to express my strong support for the modernization of the Oak Ridge Y-12 Plant as presented as the preferred alternative in the Draft Site-Wide Environmental Impact Statement (SWEIS). For almost 60 years the Y-12 Plant has played a critical role in ensuring our national security. This plant and the hundreds of thousands of Tennesseans who have worked in it were instrumental in winning a world war and ending a cold war.

Tennesseans are and always have been extremely proud of this heritage. They fully support the continued long-term missions of the Y-12 Plant in support of our national security. However, it is now critically important that these missions be performed in a modernized plant.

Currently 70 percent of the Y-12 facilities are at least 40 years old. If we expect Y-12 to continue to effectively perform its critical national security missions, we must prepare the plant for the 21st century. The proposed construction of new facilities as presented in the draft SWEIS will help ensure the continued long-term rapid response by Y-12 to its national security role. It will also allow these important defense program missions to be performed while reducing operating costs and more effectively meeting health, safety and environmental requirements. The proposed alternative for the modernization of Y-12 is, in short, good for national security and good for the U. S. taxpayer.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this Draft SWEIS.

Sincerely,



Howard H. Baker, Jr.

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Comment No. 1
Comment noted.

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(Cont.)